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Museum Talk: Charles Eagle Plume (CE)
 Program Chairman: Ruth Stauffer (RS)
 Date: February 19, 1981
 Location: Estes Park Municipal Building

Introduction by Mel Busch, curator of the Estes Park Area Historical Museum
 Questions by Lennie Bemiss (LB) and Henry Pederson (HP)

CE I can't tell you how deeply I am touched tonight; so many came out; I don't know why you came although maybe you can remember some of my past. I'm now just a sweet old man, crippled up pretty badly, straggling around, can't think very fast, and I hope that I can talk loud enough. I think that I should explain to you all--I think many of you do know--that I'm afflicted with multiple sclerosis which weakens the voice as well as the body, so I can't speak as I used to. As you may know, I've been a speaker for many years, over fifty years. In that time I've spoken to over seven thousand audiences all over America, and I don't mind saying that I'm pretty damned good! I wore my feathers. If I wasn't good, they were dazzled by those. All I'd do is swing my head, and these things would fly around, and the moths would fly out! (Laughter)

I came here to Estes Park in 1917, and it was a sweet, little country village. Elkhorn Avenue was a dirt street. Every morning the cows would come out of the barns and walk down the street, working their way out some place to pasture, which is now valuable land, but was damned good cow pasture. And chickens, chickens were very common on Elkhorn Avenue, and the sidewalks were boardwalks. On every corner there was a trough, a watering trough for horses; and in about every block on Elkhorn Avenue there was a horse livery.

All the buildings were log. It was a beautiful little mountain town; that was the reason thousands of people began to come to Estes Park because of what they dreamed of, a quaint, rural mountain village. We couldn't keep it that way, of course. We had to pave the streets; we had to put in sidewalks; we had to take the horse troughs out.

Unfortunately, we destroyed our beautiful little log cabin buildings. Up went the cinder blocks, up went the plaster, we reproduced perfectly a little suburban shopping center, as you might see in the poorer parts of a big city. And so our little village, which was once beautiful, is now rather commonplace. It breaks my heart. Now there are only a few storefronts that do have character and quality. The last one left in the village, like the old-timers, is the wonderful old Macdonald's Bookstore, the one building that reminds me of Estes Park as it used to be. Then, the new buildings--we can speak with pride of the Petrocine building. It's very charming; it looks like it belongs in the West, in this mountain village. But the rest--I'm sorry, for it breaks my heart.

I loved the village back in those days, but I came here very poor. I hitch-hiked down here from Browning, Montana. By the time I reached Estes Park, I had exactly four pennies in my pocket, in the only pocket I had that didn't have a hole in it. I treasured those pennies. Those days you could go into almost any store and tell them that you didn't have any money and had no place to sleep, and they'd say, "Well, you can sleep here tonight, on the floor, if you want. We're about to eat; come on in and eat!" Well, I learned quickly what hour each person in Estes Park ate! (Laughter) I lived through the whole summer; somehow I got through the winter. I don't recall exactly how I did.

I got through the winter, and the next summer came. I decided I should find myself a home. So I went up to the end of Fall River Pass, and right up where that big store is today, I dug a hole down in the turf down to the rocks. I went down to timberline and hauled up old, rotten dying logs, put them over the top of the hole, put sod on top of that, and I lived there.

When they started building Trail Ridge Road, and the workmen finally got to the top, they were amazed to find a scrawny little quarter-breed Indian living up there in a hole in the ground. It ruined my home because they all brought their whiskey bottles up there. I had to move out. Also, all the coyotes left. Most of the ptarmigan left. The elk and the deer that grazed all over the range up on top all summer began to disappear.

It was a great time. Evening would come, and I'd want to go to the movies. I was only nineteen years old, and at the movies there were usually some pretty girls in the back row. So I would walk from the top of Trail Ridge all the way down, dog-trot really, to go to the movies, and then dog-trot back. I did that many and many a time.

In perfect health, I learned a good racket. I heard about an Indian, a full-blooded Indian, living out on the South St. Vrain at a place called the Perkins' Trading Post, and I went out there to introduce myself. We became good friends, and Mr. Perkins, the trader, said, "We'd like to keep you, Charlie. We'd like to have you around, but we can't afford to pay you anything. All we can give you is board and room." I said, "Great, that's better than I've got!" (Laughter)

So Ray Silver Tongue, the Indian boy, and I began planning how we could make some money. We decided we would give programs. Now, this was before I had ever done any professional work at all; no, I had never faced an audience. So I went around to different hotels and said, "Would you like an Indian show tonight?"

Finally, the Craggs said, "Well, come down here and try it." So we went, and hundreds and hundreds of tourists showed up that night. We went right through the village with sleigh bells on and eagle feathers flying to the sky, and by the time we got there the tourists had either left the village or they were going to see the show. So they came to the show, and we passed the hat. Now, remember, this was back in the early twenties. Back then a dollar was worth a great deal of money. We could telephone for a nickel. We could send a letter for three cents. So a dollar was a lot of money. We passed the hat once, twice; and we made the remark that we didn't like the sound of silver, we liked the rustling noise like aspen leaves. (Laughter) By golly, we took in forty dollars!

In two months I owned a Ford roadster, bright yellow! Oh, it was a beautiful menace on the road...and some new shoes! Then, in the summer I had a new pair of pants. This was a damned good racket. We were making more money than the stores were downtown! So we'd do it the next summer. By that time we had worked up a pretty good show. Tourists would come up from all over; they'd even come up from Colorado Springs to hear our show. We'd pass the hat, and we were making five hundred dollars a night. We were the richest guys in town. Now, they won't admit it, but it is that money that built The Wheel! (Laughter)

Remember, there were two young Indians, and our social life was rather limited. We weren't invited to parties. We had a place to go, but we couldn't go every place. There was even a more wonderful place, the old Dark Horse Inn. The Dark Horse Inn--I want to cry--not because it was an alcoholic establishment, but because it was a beautiful thing really. Just to make a parking space for maybe fifteen more cars, our city fathers decided that it should be torn down, and they destroyed one of the most charming things in Estes Park! Thousands of tourists came just to see it. They'd heard of it. Thousands came again year after year because they loved it. We very short-sightedly destroyed it, just to make a parking space. We could have made an equal parking space--well, I'm not going to mention other places that could have been torn down. (Laughter) Well, we tore down our village; we finally tore down our Dark Horse Inn. There were very few people then in the village who were historically-minded; I don't remember anybody who cared about old buildings, the charm of the past.

You see, the important thing of being connected with a museum is this: the more you know about your past, the more you know what is likely to be your future. It is a very important thing to keep in contact with your roots, the beginnings of your history. Estes Park has a great history behind it. Now everybody has read, I'm sure, something of the history of the Joel Estes family; so I'm not going to talk about that. But before Estes, there were many, many great characters that came into this region. I'm

going to talk about some of them. The real history of the white man in the Estes Park valley starts with the beaver trappers. One of the greatest men in American history was the little fellow five feet-four and a half inches tall. He weighed a hundred and twenty-one pounds, and he was pure dynamite. He conquered most of the West; he opened it, let us say, for conquest. Because of him, we got California. Because of him, the discoveries made by Lewis and Clark on their travels up the Missouri were opened up to settlers. Because of the little fellow who settled in our valley, who trapped beaver here, Estes came, and the ranchers behind him. His name was Kit Carson. Little Kit Carson, one of the greatest names in American history. I urge all of you to read about Kit Carson because he is the beginning of the Estes Park valley.

Now Kit lived in various places. I have found one about two miles from my building, and by the way, do you know where my building is? You see, I think it would be very improper, in bad taste, for me to mention that I am in business up here, and that my building is only ten miles from town! On Highway 7! South St. Vrain! As you are going south, it's on your left hand side! I think that would be very crude of me, so I'm not going to do it--but don't miss it!

Now, what was I talking about? Kit Carson lived only two miles from me, but long before I came. Just before the Civil War, he had a beaver trapping camp down there, and he had to fire one of his men. This is part of the history of Estes Park. So if any of you are thinking of studying deeply, of doing any more research, and maybe, God hope, of writing a good book, there have been some good books written on Estes, but there is room for more. This is hardly ever mentioned. When that guy was up here making a movie--Michener, great organizer, but he misses so much stuff--he came to my store. I said, "Mr. Michener, your book is great. I could have told about everybody whom you wrote up before you did; this chapter is so-and-so, here's doctor so-and-so, and this so-and so. You should have come out here; I could have told you something." Right down the road is old Kit Carson's camp, and in that camp he had to fire one of his men.

Now, Kit was a very kind fellow. He was a fighter, full of courage. Indians feared him, but when he had to fire a man, he cried. He couldn't write, you know, so he dictated a letter, a letter sent back to the offices in St. Louis of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trading Company. In the letter he said that he had to fire this man not for murder, not for cannibalism, but because he was lazy. He wrote just one sentence, "He got his meat in camp."

Now, I happen to know what that means because I come from an old Western family. I'm not all Indian. My father was a white man, a German. We're trying to live it down, but it's true! (Laughter)

So I knew what that meant--he got his meat in camp. It meant he ate somebody in the camp. Now, this trapper wanted to have life a little more comfortable and easy, so he married two Indian women. Their job was to keep him warm at night, cook his meals, skin out the beaver, stretch the hide out on wire hoops and scrape them. Great things to have; when you have two, it's better than one. But the snows came in. He was kind of a lazy guy who didn't want to go out in the deep snow and get help for food, so he killed them both and strung them up in trees and ate them all winter. I love that story! That's a great story in American history, and a great story in the history of Estes Park! Kit Carson's hired man ate his two squaws! I can see the headlines now had there been a Denver Post to record the experience!

Beside the trappers, the first people here, we don't know who they were. We do have evidence now from discoveries up around Fort Collins and a recent discovery in a cave near Lyons that the first of what we call the Indians came about fifteen thousand years ago into this area. We know that human beings, Mongolians, therefore Indians, or the ancestors of Indians came into North America about thirty-five to forty-five thousand years ago, and they got down here, we can definitely prove about twenty thousand years ago. I suspect that they were here longer than that. I would suspect about thirty thousand years. We have found quite a few old stone artifacts here. Some of the arrowheads belong to the very earliest cultures. Now I know many of them are real because we used to sell them to Jack Moomaw, who was a ranger, and Jack would go up and find them on Trail Ridge and give them to the National Park. They're in the museum out there. I sure spilled the beans on that! But they're ancient, and they're no older than some we've found. So it's all right. The tourists are rapidly stealing them anyway; there won't be any left. That's good enough. Most of the tourists we've got here come from Illinois; that's where most of those arrowheads came from!

About 1800 the very first of the white people were getting around here; of course, there had been some Spaniards. There was a Spaniard--I can't remember his name, but I know it well--came up with a party up to the Platte and then followed the Platte out to the plains. There is a great antique somewhere in the Platte River for whoever finds it. This man was a prince, a Spanish prince, and he was ordered to explore into the wilderness, up in what they called in those days the Northern Colorado, which included the entire area which by the way belonged to the Pope of Rome because the Pope, you remember, made the demarcation line--Portugal had part of the world, and Spain had the other part. He retained the part that might have gold in it. So he had a belt about two hundred miles wide, right along the continental divide. This Spaniard got out on the Platte, and the Indians jumped him. Now the Indians were friendly fellows, but they liked to play. They didn't quite understand the white man anyway, and they didn't know what in the hell he was doing there. So they jumped him, and in

his flight he lost his salt shaker. The only reason he had come was that the King of Spain had guaranteed that he would have salt, and he had given him a six-inch tall solid silver salt shaker. It's lying somewhere in the sands on the South Platte. I urge all of you to find it. Silver is certain to go up again in price, and a real antique is a rare thing nowadays. We ought to know; we're in Estes Park where the name of the game is antique stores. We know what a game it is, but, boy, what an antique that would be.

The Indians who chased him were the Cheyennes. Now the Cheyennes are great people. I would say, although I come from the Blackfeet, my favorite Indians are the Cheyennes. They were beautiful. The average Cheyenne, male or female, was over six feet tall. They were very athletic; they were slim. They were quite handsome. I always remember a famous artist who, when he was traveling, went to see the great collection in Rome at the papal studios, and walked into the gallery where the Greek statues were. Lining the room were hundreds of beautiful Greek statues, and he exclaimed, "My God, they're all Cheyennes!" (Laughter) They were an outstanding people, full of courage, brave, generous, friendly, and extremely handsome. They spoke a language that indicated that they came really from way back in Maine. They had been farmers, but the white man began to settle on the eastern coast. With the white man came strange diseases, and the eastern tribes began to come west to escape from that white man, that dangerous creature that they couldn't understand.

Along with the Cheyennes came a neighboring tribe that spoke a similar language, the Arapahoes. While you can speak highly of the Cheyennes in every way, the only way to talk about the Arapahoes is to tell dirty stories. The Arapahoes were not a very moral people. They were unclean, they were not very good-looking, and they were very tricky, treacherous. So the Indians who lived where Estes Park is were Arapahoes. That's why I keep myself very broad-minded about many of our businessmen. (Laughter) Don't worry; I've got my airline ticket paid for! The Cheyennes and Arapahoes lived in this valley for about a hundred years.

The white men began coming in right around the Civil War, before the Civil War, and they began to build their way. Then they discovered gold in Colorado, and the Indians were in their way. The State of Colorado had to give a pretext to get them out. I won't go into detail because that's another story entirely. But the Indians were blamed for many murders, many of the fights out on the plains, instigated by the warring parties of the whites--some of whom were settlers, Southern sympathizers, or Northern sympathizers, Catholics were killing Methodists, but the Methodists were all right because they multiply fast! (Laughter) So under the pretext that Indians were murdering the white people and attacking all the settlers, under a retired Methodist minister named Chivington, a peaceful Cheyenne camp was attacked, and women, children, babies, old and young were all murdered. The spirit

was broken in the Cheyenne tribe. When the governor at that time after whom we have named one of our peaks declared that they should all be killed or pushed out of the state, out they went. So the story of the Indian ends about then.

If you want to read more about it, you can read Bent's Fort. I urge every person living in Colorado to read that book, full of some of this information with some mistakes, but only a few, but with much, much information. Another book that I want you all to read, a book written by a man named Dan Cushman, is named The Great North Trail because, you see, you're living on the Great North Trail.

Being white people, you think that all the migrations in America came from Plymouth Rock westward. Your movement across America is a freak. All other movements have been from the north, down the Great North Trail. We know that the first human beings who came into North America came in by the way of Bering Strait. They followed the only route then, a slot around the glaciers--remember the glacier age--down along the eastern side of the great chain of mountains that we call the Rocky Mountains. Stretching from the Yukon clear to the Panama Canal is an ancient trail called the Great North Trail, and this man, Dan Cushman, has written a book called The Great North Trail. Read it. It will give you an understanding about the nature of this country. Why, drought--we are having one now--has been before, many times. It's nothing new. There's a reason for it. Why some winters is there too much snow? Why the great winds? Every single living thing in North and South America is descended from something that had to come down the Great North Trail. The geology of our country is beautifully described in his story about that trail, as well as politics right up until modern times. If I have done nothing else for you tonight, I recommend that one book--which by the way I'm sure that you can get at Macdonald's bookstore.

I mention Macdonald's bookstore not because it is here, but because when I came here, poor and friendless, a dear little lady, Mrs. Macdonald (Many of you can remember her; she was a perfect Victorian lady, gentle, kind, and beautiful. She was old even then.) always saw to it that I had breakfast. She said, "Charlie, no matter how discouraging the day can be, no matter how much terror there can be, as long as you've got a full stomach at breakfast, you can face it." And she took me out every morning and said, "Go get a job!" Because of her, I got to passing that hat around and made my way. Mrs. Macdonald!

And who can remember Mrs. Clauser? Or Mrs. Church? Dear old lady Church had a store where I think there is now a filling station up there--Exxon? Her little store was right up in there. Every summer she'd dress herself up in an Indian dress and braid her gray hair. She looked rather fierce anyway, and as she'd walk up and down the street, tourists would get a thrill. Finally, they'd say, "May we take your picture?" And little Mrs. Church, who was one of the founders of our first church in Estes Park, would stand and be

photographed as a bloodthirsty savage all summer long. (Laughter) She got enough money to open an ice cream parlor; however, that was the end for her. It became the hangout of the teenagers. Even then they were under suspicion. They were doing better than we could, but we hoped we could do once more. So they were under suspicion. Mrs. Church finally died when a rock fell on her in the Big Thompson Canyon.

They were all ladies, generous and kind. When they died, we lost something in Estes Park. Many of us, even today, want to cry. I'll always remember Mrs. Hondius coming out on the porch and saying, "Get the hell out of here!" She could say it with more authority than any other woman I ever knew.

Who can remember Charlie Hewes? Charlie Hewes built a hotel up behind the Longs Peak Inn. Now, we all know the Longs Peaks Inn because there was a great fraud up there named Enos Mills. Enos Mills was a fraud in this way. He wrote a great many books to please sweet little ladies back in Boston. He could talk to the chipmunks, he could understand the bluejays, he even talked with the bears, he had an unlimited vocabulary. And he fell down off of Longs Peak, fell five thousand feet, and didn't break his glasses. This touched the hearts of thousands of sweet little old ladies. So when Enos Mills began to write that they should save the Rocky Mountains, they should make a National Park, thousands of little voters wrote to their senators. Now no senator would have made a Rocky Mountain National Park except that there were enough little old ladies voting about it. They pressured them into making our National Park. So we must give due respect to Enos Mills. Liar though he was, poser though he was, nature-faker though he was, he accomplished what he wanted. He was all those things because he knew that was the way to get it, and he got it for us. I don't know why some day we don't have a statue to Enos Mills. There should be one.

I think a monument of rocks maybe to Joel Estes is enough, for in this world he deserves a great deal of honor. Oh, I could mention a dozen other people who deserve it, too, but he's one of our great names.

When I came here, the tourist business was booming, but there were not so many people. In fact, there were only about five families that counted at all: the Crockers, the Pews, the Nitzes-- I forget the other two. I think we chased them out of town; but you see, when the Crockers came into town, they didn't just buy hamburgers. They spent a thousand dollars in every shop on the street. I can always remember Mr. Crocker saying, "If I spend enough money here, it will save me from spending too damned much money at home. I can buy all the gifts I need to give away to all my employees and all my friends." Mr. Crocker, being a very wealthy man, had to give away a great many gifts, and so these few very wealthy, cultured people kept Estes Park. Then we became very ambitious and decided that we wanted more people, and we

began to court Longmont and Greeley with their good people--sweet, don't bathe very often, but they're all game. So we got more and more honky-tonky shops. So now we have thousands of people and a traffic problem, and we're making less money.

We have destroyed something, and the only way I can see for us to court that back is to have a museum of great quality. Now there are only two geographical areas in the West where there are fine museums. One's at Cody. You all know that thousands and thousands of people go to Cody every summer to see their great museum. The other area is Santa Fe, and thousands of people go to Santa Fe. Oh, there's a pretty good museum or two in Denver, but what tourist is going to hang around Denver? They want to come up into the mountains, but we have so little to attract them, except curio stores. We tore down the old Dark Horse. I don't know what we've got to make them want to come anymore, except the cool weather maybe. But we could have some great museums.

We're starting with a little one, and so we all have to get behind that little one to develop it and make it bigger. I personally am going to give to it a collection of Indian artifacts which will require another building the size of the present one. (Applause) No, no, it's tax deductible! (Laughter) That's why I'm doing it. Besides, the moths get into it, and I haven't got any place to keep it. But you could all in some way help the museum with money, with your time, and with your gifts. It's a great thing for the village, and I want to see Estes Park become known as the center not only of entertainment, bars, but of culture, center of history, inspiration in American history and patriotism. We could do it with museums. So your being here tonight is unimportant unless you're dedicating yourselves to your local museum, to help it in every way you can. Now, I've talked long enough, my feet are tired, and my brain has quit--you noticed that anyway. Do you have any questions?

HP Did you know Joe Mills?

CE Oh, I knew Joe Mills! He was great!

HP Can you tell us something about him?

CE Joe was a quiet little fellow. He was Enos Mills' brother. He was his complete opposite. Enos Mills was a showman. Now he knew what had to be done. He knew the Park had to be created. He had to save the day, so he became something of a poser. It's easy for me and everybody else to ridicule him, but it was his way, his tool. But Joe Mills was too shy; he was a sweet, kind little old man, married to a great lady, Ethel, I believe her name was. I loved Ethel. She brought thousands of tourists because of her charming way. Some day somebody will write a book on Joe and Ethel. They're great folks.

LB I have a question. I am at the library, and I have a young man doing research on Highway 7 for the State Highway Department. He's interested in any history of the road. They really do not have anything written about when the road was built. Of course, we can tell him about the original road by Baldpate. Would you comment on the history?

CE Well, Highway 7 was an accident. It just wandered down there from ranch house to ranch house. The Perkins family built the building where my store is now. Why I've never been quite sure. It's the worst place in the world to build one. There's no reason anybody should stop. No view, nothing, we don't even sell beer. (Laughter) Somehow I trap them in there. The road just kind of happened. In fact, when we built, it was just wide enough for a Model T Ford; and it went this way and that way, always by the front door of the building, all the way down. In case you needed help, you were right there at the door.

LB This is 1917?

CE Yes, then one winter when we were away, the state came in and built a highway right through our kitchen. They come in constantly now to tell me that I'm too close to the road. I say, "Oh, no, you got too close to me!" We had to tear the kitchen down! Our front door is what used to be our back door. They built that damned road right outside our place and forgot to put in a parking space! (Laughter)

LB Charlie, do you remember what year that was?

CE It must have been 1922 or '23. I can remember in 1925 I used to stand out there all day with a hose watering down the dirt road because of the dust. I'd just get it watered down at the north end of the house, and it was dry at the south end.

Voice I have always heard that you were very well educated. How, when, and where did you get all of your education? From your speech I can tell that you are.

CE Well, about the history of that, Ray Silvertongue and I went down to what was called in those days The Lodge of Pines, a hotel down there in Ward. When we gave a show one night, a lady said, "You should go to college."

"I can't go to college; I can't afford it. I haven't got the money. I tried one time and went over to Greeley with five dollars in my pocket. They let me in and within two weeks I didn't have anything. I can't afford it."

This white lady said, "I'll see to it that you can go to college wherever you want to go!" And she sent me enough money every month to go to school at Boulder.

When I got through at Boulder, I went out to lecture. By then I

was making enough money, and I was only twenty-five years old. The girls were beautiful those days in New York, so I decided to go to Columbia University. You could ride the subway for a nickel, and the girls on that subway were dandies. (Laughter) And I knew the stations, too. Finally, I got a doctorate at Columbia. I never mention it because people always suspect anybody who has a doctorate. And they've got damned good reason to be suspicious!

Now I have one very vile habit. Because I am in pain most of the time, I have to smoke. Cigarettes kill the pain, especially the kind I smoke! (Laughter) Parliament, now I want to show you why most of the rest of us old men like me smoke. Last summer a customer lit up a cigarette, and I said, "Young lady, what kind of a cigarette is that?"

RS This is a Parliament. What are yours, Charles?

CE You should smoke these. These are good for you. Free, absolutely no nicotine. No tobacco. If you have been smoking for fifty-five years, you smell the real thing, and you crave. But I am too proud to borrow. However, I would willingly accept-- (Laughter).

Aren't we awfully hot in here?

RS Why don't you sit down and smoke?

CE I'd like to sit down, but there are so many good-looking women here. If I sit down, I can't see them.

Voice You haven't mentioned your family. Did you ever get married?

CE Four times! Thank God! I had a happy life. Unfortunately, all my wives had Indian blood which has no resistance against smallpox, diphtheria, and I lost my wives.

Voice Tell us about your tie.

CE It's for sale. (Laughter)

RS He didn't say for what?

CE Well, believe it or not, this tie was for sale in my shop five years ago for \$70. Prices kept going up and going up, and one time when I was down in Santa Fe, a man opening a store there offered me \$1,000. for it. So I said, "By God, I'm going to give it to me!" The great thing about it is that you don't have to button your shirt! (Laughter) It's also a dirty old man.

Voice Did you make it?

CE Oh, no, I make no jewelry. I don't know how. I like this old thing because he's a dirty old man. This figure you'll see on a great many different kinds of jewelry--a hunch-backed man, criticized

every so often especially by sweet little ladies, sweet little ladies from Kansas, the worst kind. They come up and put it in my face and ask me, "What does it mean?" Well, I can't tell them. I've got all kinds of stories made up. The truth is it's a dirty old man, and I just love him. But I don't dare tell the story about him.

Voice Charles, you didn't mention Mr. Stanley in your talk. What can you tell us about F. O. Stanley?

CE Oh, I didn't know F. O. Stanley. I never had the courage to go up on that hill; those people were too rich. I finally knew Emery, and he was an S.O.B.

Voice Tell us about the Stanleys.

CE I never knew the Stanleys. I have great respect for them because they built a beautiful building. Maybe the answer to that building is that it could be our museum! (Applause)

RS I want to thank Charles for putting in that fine plug for the museum because if--and I heard him and it has been recorded twice that he might donate some of those valuable things--if we have the right kind of building, if we have the right kind of insurance protection, etc. This means that we have to have some wealthy donors. I don't see any from here, but maybe some of your friends are wealthy. We do need to build up the building fund. At one time we thought we could put a wing on the building for \$60,000. The town would give \$20,000, the contributors would give \$20,000, and the state would give \$30,000; but because they didn't sell enough medals, that didn't work. This is for future work, but we do hope that we will have the kind of museum that Cody has, that Santa Fe has. Why not? Look at the people that are coming to Estes Park!

CE Let me assure you that it would increase the value of your property!

RS Of course!

CE It might triple the value!

RS Now, not talking monetarily but sentimentally, I am so pleased not only that Charles Eagle Plume came, but that all of you came. And I will apologize to Charles. I said, "If you come, we'll have a small, informal meeting; and he said, "I don't like to stand up." I said, "You can sit down." I thought that there might be thirty or forty, but once it gets in The Trail-Gazette with the name Charles Eagle Plume, look what happens--standing room only! But I think we should allow him to sit down, and we might be able to have some refreshments if there is room out there. You can talk to Charles.

CE You talk about refreshments--if one person would just bring one little cup of water!

- RS That would be nice! You can have a cup of water!
- Voice How did you happen to come to Estes Park?
- CE Well, I heard about it, that it was a beautiful area, and I love mountains. It was and still is a great place.
- Voice You came from Montana?
- CE I am from there. I used to go to school when it was 55 below zero in Montana. As harsh as our winters are here at times, they are never that bad. Most of the time they are very good. I'm constantly tempted to travel again. I'd like to raise a little hell once again in L.A., drink another beer in Chicago, and pinch a girl in New York. Then I get to thinking. Wait a minute, old boy, turn on your TV and see what the weather is like back there. Every time I turn it on, the weather is hell, and we're having a day like this one. This is a typical Estes Park winter day. Most of the time we've got gorgeous weather. We're the luckiest people in the world. Let's show our appreciation by helping the town have a good museum.
- RS Thank you, Charles. Thank you all for coming. Thanks very much, Charles!
- CE By God, they took me seriously! This is just water!

Date: March 17, 1981

Transcriber, Editor, and Final Transcript: Lorraine Roberts

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I hereby give and grant to the Estes Park Area Historical Museum as a donation, for such scholarly and educational purposes as the Museum shall determine, the tape recordings and their contents listed below.

CHARLES EAGLE PLUME LIFE & EXPERIENCES

Subject of tape(s) *SUBJET TO HIS EDITING*

Notes of significance to tape(s)

Charles Eagle Plume

Name of Interviewee

Charles Eagle Plume

Signature

South St. Vrain Highway, Allenspark, Colorado

Address of Interviewee

Mel Busch

Mel Busch

Betty Hedlund

Name of Interviewer

Signature

Estes Park Area Historical Museum

Address of Interviewer

September 24, 1986

Date of Agreement



ESTES PARK AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM, INC.

BOX 1691

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Charles Eagle Pluma
Name of narrator

Alpenspark
Address of narrator

Elaine Hartman
Name of interviewer

Box 134 Estes Park
Address of interviewer

1-23-79
Date of agreement

Subject of Tape (s)